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THE CASTLE ST. LOUIS, QUEBEC,

1759-1834.

BY

J. M. LE MOINE, F.R.S.C.,

QUEBEC.

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CASTLE ST. LOUIS.* UNDER THE ROSES.

PART II. ; 1759-1834.

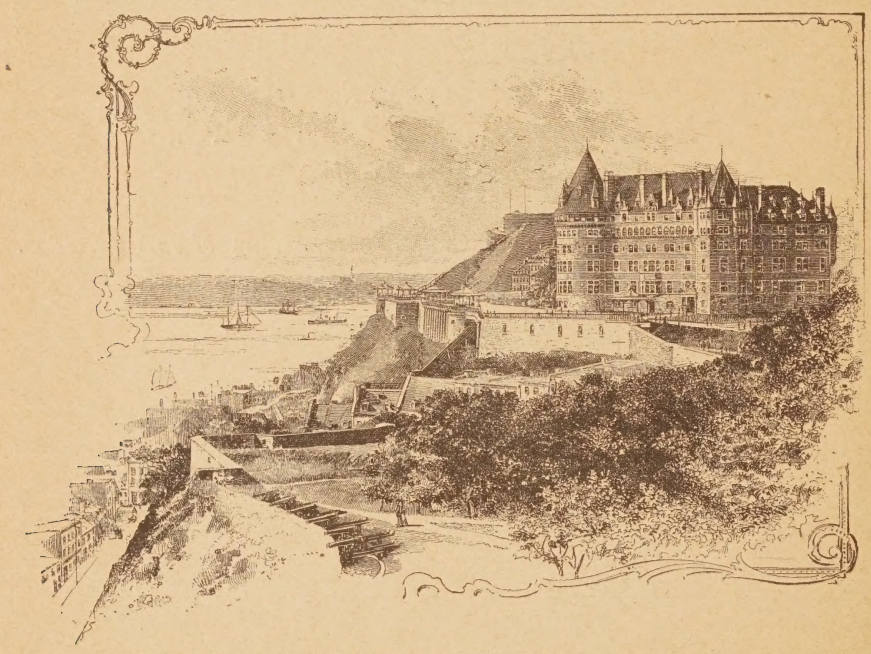
BY J. M. LE MOINE, F.R.S.C.

"Such dusky grandeur clothed the height
Where the huge castle holds its state,
And all the steep slope, down
Whose ridgy back heaves to the sky,
Piled deep and massy, close and high
Mine own romantic town."

SCOTT'S MARMION.

THE Castle and Fort St. Louis under England's domination has had its sunshine and its shadows; its dark as well as its bright, radiant memories; its anxious hours of seige and alarm—nay, even of blockade, followed by the welcome roar of artillery, proclaiming British victories; more than once social pageants and many festive displays.

Facing the site of the fort, long since vanished, a few yards to the west, lies the well-known area, *La Grande Place du Fort* (since 1862, the Ring), mantled in foliage and trees, planted when Mayor Thomas Pope held out at the City Hall. Our warlike ancestors knew it as the *Place d'Armes*. In days by gone, have met, not for military drill, but for annual roll-call, on St. Peter and St. Paul's Day, June the 29th, the city militia—an important—though a very pacific body. It continued for years, until dropped about 1850.



HOTEL CHATEAU FRONTENAC.
Built in 1892 on the site of Castle St. Louis, Quebec.

Hark! to the rousing cheer of the

*For the use of several incidents relating to Chateau Saint Louis, especially for the period of French occupation, full acknowledgment is due to Mr. Ernest Gagnon's volume, *Le Fort et le Chateau St. Louis*, 376 pages. For further particulars *vide Quebec Past and Present*, p. 458; and *Picturesque Quebec*, pp. 60, 70, 68, 72-76, 92, 118, 465.

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British soldiery, as they plant on the Grande Parade, facing the historic Chateau, on the 18th of September, 1759, the day of the capitulation of Quebec, the solitary gun, drawn from the Heights of Abraham through St. Louis gate. Captain John Knox, of the 43rd. Regt., tell us how his brave commander hoisted the English flag, after taking possession of the keys of Quebec from de Ramsay, its late governor. He says: "the three companies of Louisbourg Grenadiers and some light infantry, under the command of Lt.-Col. Murray, preceded by fifty men of the Royal Artillery and one gun, with lighted match, and with the British colors hoisted on its carriage, the Union flag being displayed on the citadel. Captain Paliser, with a large body of seamen and inferior officers, at the same time took possession of the lower town, and hoisted colors on the summit of the declivity (Mountain Hill) leading from the high to the low town." (Knox's Journal.)

But the lordly castle of other days, riddled by the shot and shell of the English fleet, tenantless, uninhabitable, was not thoroughly repaired until 1764-5, when General James Murray, first Governor of Quebec, had his Royal Commission read on the adjoining square, prior to his taking possesion of the Castle as his official residence. A decade later, and the occupant (Sir) Guy Carleton, so appropriately named the "saviour of Quebec," might notice, from the Chateau windows, the arrival on the Levis shore, on the 5th November, 1775, of Benedict Arnold's hungry and worn-out continentals, eager to cross the St. Lawrence, and land at Wolfe's cove above. But a wise precaution had induced Lt.-Governor Cramahe to remove to the Quebec side the Levis canoes and water conveyances before the arrival of the invading host. The wave of invasion, triumphant at Montreal, Sorel, Chambly, Three Rivers, St. John and elsewhere, was hurled back by the granite rock of Quebec. On the 31st December, 1775, at 9 a.m., the intrepid chieftain, Guy Carleton, could from his parlor windows look down triumphantly, but not scornfully, on the New England soldiery, escorted to the Grande Parade—426 rank and file—marched up prisoners of war, from the Sault-au-Matelot assault, to await, crest-fallen, the orders of His Excellency before being detailed to their respective prisons.*

Might one not unreasonably infer, from the official etiquette that has ever prevailed among naval commanders frequenting our port, that the youthful captain of the sloop of war Albemarle, Horatio Nelson, present here in 1782, paid his *devoirs* at the Castle, to the distinguished Governor-General, Sir Frederick Haldimand, and partook of the hospitalities usually shown to visitors of distinction? At his romantic time of life did Nelson, like many subsequent lovers, indulge in a sentimental promenade on the famed Castle terrace? Did he ever, at the witching hour when the citadel evening-gun calls to barrack military beaux, meet there the adorable Mary Simpson, the girl for whose sake he was, he said, ready to quit the service? Southey, as well as Lamartine, in their biographies of the hero of Trafalgar, state that violence had to be used to tear the smitten Horatio from his Quebec charmer. Miss Simpson, after marrying Major Matthews, Secretary to the Governor, removed to London with her husband who became Governor of Chelsea Hospital. In one of her letters she mentions attending the funeral of Lord Nelson, her first love, whom she had not forgotten. She died in England in 1830 at an advanced age. Is not this a pleasant little episode of Quebec history?

A titled visitor of no ordinary rank entered the portals of the Castle in 1787, Prince William Henry, Duke of Clarence, subsequently William IV., King of England. He was then a royster-

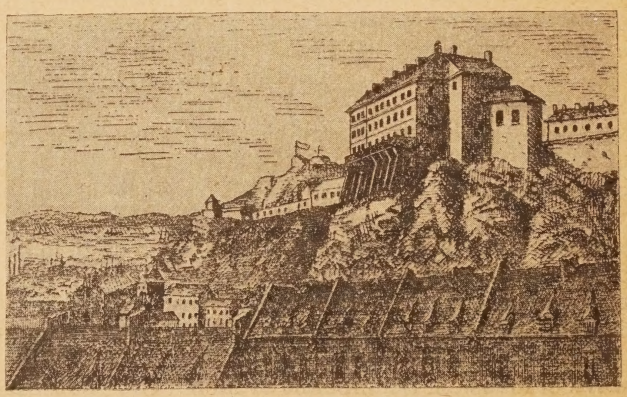
*See old Quebec *Gazette*, 16th Aug., 1765.

Drawn for THE CANADIAN MAGAZINE

DUFFERIN TERRACE IN WINTER.

ing middy on board H. M. frigate *Pegasus*, anchored in the port below the Chateau. A grand ball was given there in his honor by Lord and Lady Dorchester. Mr. De Gaspe, the author of the *Canadians of Old*, has a spicy account of the merry entertainment. Instead of inviting to dance the demure ladies of rank officially presented to him, the sailor-prince picked out indiscriminately the youngest and prettiest girls as his partners, and had a very good time. Like other princes that followed, he had eyes for more than the scenic beauties of Quebec. The *Croniques des salons* recall a boyish lark of his in Champlain's fortress. The Royal middy, in one of his peregrinations, was struck with the uncommon beauty of a young girl in the humbler walks of life. Determined to find out who she might be, he followed her to her home. But alas! the stern parent, advised of the Duke's marked attentions to his youthful daughter, rushed out in the street after him, and laid his horsewhip vigorously on his royal shoulders, the Prince ejaculating in vain, "*Ne frappez pas! Ne frappez pas! Je suis le fils du roi.*" No mention, however, is made of the escapade in the Court Journal.

Occasionally, the castle opened its doors to rather unexpected, but not the less welcome visitors. On the 13th March, 1789, His Excellency, Lord Dorchester, had the satisfaction of entertaining a stalwart woodman and expert hunter, Major Fitzgerald, of the 54th Regiment, then stationed at St. John, New Brunswick, the son of a dear old friend, Lady Emilia Mary, daughter of the Duke of Richmond. This chivalrous woodman was no less than the dauntless Lord Edward Fitzgerald, fifth son of the Duke of Leinster, the true but misguided



CASTLE OF ST. LOUIS IN 1834.

Reproduced from an Old Print.

patriot who closed his promising career in such a melancholy manner in a prison during the Irish rebellion of 1798. Lord Edward had walked upon snow-shoes through the trackless forest from New Brunswick to Quebec, a distance of 175 miles, in thirty days, accompanied by a brother officer, Mr. Brisbane, a servant and two "woodmen." This feat of endurance is pleasantly described by himself in his correspondence.

Tom Moore, in his biography of this generous, warm-hearted son of Erin, among other dutiful epistles addressed by Lord Edward to his mother, has preserved the one telling of this overland trip.

Four years after the visit of the Duke of Clarence, on the 11th August, 1791, there arrived at Quebec George III's fourth son, Edward Duke of Kent, his brother Col. of the 7th Royal Fusileers. The frigates *Ulysses* and *Resistance*, had brought from Gibraltar this fine regiment, which the Duke commanded during his stay in the city, 1791-94. On the 12th August, there was held in his honor, at the Chateau St. Louis, a grand levee, whereat attended the authorities, civil, military and clerical, together with the gentry. In the afternoon "the ladies were presented to Prince in the chateau." Who, then, attended the levee? Did the Prince dance? Who were his partners? There is no register of names; no list of Royal Edward's partners, such as we have of the Prince of Wales, his grandson, visiting Quebec in 1860—merely an entry of the signers of the address, in the Quebec *Gazette* of the 18th August, 1791. Can we not then repeople the little world of Quebec of 1791, and bring back some of the chief actors of those stormy, political, but frolicsome times? Let us walk in with the "nobility and gentry" and make our best bow to the scion of royalty. There, in full uniform, you will recognize His Excellency, Lord Dorchester, one of our most popular administrators. Next to him, that tall, athletic military man, is the Deputy Governor-General, Sir Alured Clark. He is now in close conversation with Chief Justice William Smith; around there is a bevy of Judges, Legislative Councillors, Members of Parliament, all done up to kill, *a l'ancienne mode* by Monsieur Jean Laforme, court hairdresser, with jabots, powdered perewigs and formidable pigtails.

Here are Judge Adam Mabane, Secretary Pownell; Honorables, Messrs. Finlay, Dunn, Harrison, Holland, Collins, Caldwell, Fraser, Lymburner; Messrs. Lester, Young, and William Smith, Jr. Mingled with them you also recognize the bearers of old historic names, Messrs. Joseph de Langueuil, Baby, DeBonne, Duchesnay, Duniere, Gueroult, de Lotbiniere, Roc de St. Ours, Damburges, de Rocheblave, de Rouville, de Boucherville, Lecompte Dupres, Taschereau, de Tonnancour, Panet, de Salaberry, and a host of others. Were these gentlemen all present? Probably not all. They however, were likely to be. The *convenances* required their presence.

A volume would not suffice to detail the brilliant receptions and state balls given at the castle during Lord Dorchester's administration—the lively discussions, the formal protests originating out of points of precedence, burning *questions de jupons* between the touchy magnates of the old and those of the new *regime*; whether La Baronne de St. Laurent* would be admitted at the Chateau or not; whether a de Longueuil or a de Lotbiniere's place was on the right of Lady Maria, the charming consort of His Excellency Lord Dorchester, a daughter of the great English Earl of Effingham; whether dancing ought to cease when their Lordships the Bishops entered and made their bow to the representative of royalty. Unfortunately, Quebec had then no Court Journal, so that the generations following can have but

*This fascinating French lady had come with him from Gibraltar.

faint ideas of all the witchery, the stunning head-dresses, the *décolleteés*, and high-waisted robes of their stately grandmothers, whirled around in the giddy waltz by whiskered, epauletted cavaliers, or else courtesying in the demure *menuet de la cour*.

We are now nearing the stormy era of "Little King Craig." Troublous times are looming out portentously for the earnest, hospitable, but stern Laird of the Castle, Sir James Henry Craig. The lightning cloud, however, will burst over his successor, Sir George Prevost. As oft before, the trumpet of Bellona has sounded; this time at Washington, on the 18th June, 1812. "Prepare for the Invader," is repeated with bated breath in the streets of Quebec. "Trust in God and keep your powder dry," would have been the reply of warlike, fighting Sir James H. Craig, had he been at the Chateau when hostilities broke out from beyond the border. Soon tokens of battle of a foreign pattern will stud the approach to the castle.

"Five cannon taken at Detroit, are now lying in the Chateau court," says the Quebec *Mercury*, of 27th October, 1813, whilst the prisoners taken at Detroit, brought down to Quebec, await embarkation for Boston, for purposes of exchange. Quebec was martial with United States uniforms—American prisoners—the Yankee Generals Winder, Chandler, and Winchester; Col. Winfield Scott, later on General Winfield Scott, who culled laurels in the Mexican War, and so many other officers and privates, that the Governor of Canada scarcely knew how to dispose of them.

"The result of the American defeat at Queenston," says the historian, Robert Christie, "had been important. One general officer (Wadsworth), two lieutenant-colonels, five majors, a multitude of captains and subalterns, with nine hundred men, one field-piece, and a stand of colors, were the fruits of the victory, the enemy having lost in killed, wounded, missing and prisoners, upwards of fifteen hundred men.'

Sir George Prevost may possibly have, from the terrace of his Chateau, been watching the embarkation of the invaders on board of the transports anchored in the harbor below, after having witnessed in the September previous their arrival as prisoners at the Union Hotel, facing the castle.

We find in the Quebec *Mercury* of 15th September, 1812, the following item:—"On Friday, arrived here the detained prisoners taken with General Hull at Detroit. The non-commissioned officers and privates immediately embarked on board of transports in the harbor, which are to serve as their prisons. The commissioned officers were liberated on their *parole*. They passed Saturday morning at the Union Hotel, where they were the gazing-stock of the multitude, whilst they, no way abashed, presented a bold front to the public stare and puffed the smoke of their cigars into the faces of such as approached too near. About two o'clock they set off in a stage with four horses for Charlesbourg, the destined place of their residence."

What changes the wheel of time does bring round! Eighty-three years after that date, Hough's "stage and four horses" might occasionally be met on the same road, conveying a jolly squad of United States tourists, mayhap some of the grandsons of the Invaders of 1812, not to Charlesbourg as a forced "place of residence," but to the romantic ruins of Chateau Bigot, all bent on having a good time.

Did the chieftain of St. Louis Castle locate those prisoners at Charlesbourg proper or in that other adjoining locality, Beauport, in Judge De Bonne's former stately old mansion, on which the eastern and detached wing of the Beauport Lunatic Asylum now stands. Tradition has ever pointed to the latter building. They had not been under restraint much more than a week when, by the following advertisement in the Quebec *Mercury*, dated 29th September, 1812,

we find the British authorities attending to their comforts with a truly maternal foresight:

"COMMISSARY GENERAL'S OFFICE,
QUEBEC, 28th Sept., 1812.

"Wanted, for the American prisoners of war, comfortable, warm clothing, consisting of the following articles:

Jackets,
Shirts,
Drawers,
Mocassins or Shoes,
Also 2,000 pounds of Soap."

From this it is clear John Bull intended his American cousins should not only be kept warm, but suitably scrubbed as well. Two thousand pounds of soap foreshadowed a fabulous amount of scrubbing.

Col. Scott remained in Canada from the date of his surrender, 23rd October, 1812, to the period of his departure from Quebec, say May 1813. But he was on *parole* the whole time.

Benson J. Lossing relates a creditable anecdote concerning the majestic and humane Colonel, later on christened by his country "Old Fuss and Feathers" on account of his love of dress and display on his imposing person. It mentions Col. Scott as interceding with the British authorities to secure better treatment for some of the Irishmen taken prisoners who were supposed to have violated their allegiance as former British subjects, and his succeeding in his humane mission.

Tradition points out, as the residence of the American officers, *paroled* later on in Quebec, the dwelling in St. Louis street formerly occupied by Wm. Smith the historian, and since enlarged and fitted out for the Union Club.

More than once, as it has been previously stated, the grand old chateau wore a funereal aspect. Mr. Ernest Gagnon, in his interesting sketch of the Chateau Saint Louis, quotes a striking passage from *Vie de Madame C. E. Casgrain*, the mother of Abbé H. R. Casgrain, the historian. This lady, in relating one of her first visits to the castle, on 4th Sept., 1819, tells of the silent groups of city visitors, attracted to view for the last time, the inanimate remains of its late occupant, Charles G. Lennox, Duke of Richmond, Lennox and Aubigny, Governor-General of Canada, an old Waterloo man. The Duke had fallen a victim to hydrophobia, contracted from the bite of a tame fox, which he had thoughtlessly petted on the market-place in Sorel, before joining a hunting party. Madame Casgrain vividly portrayed the harrowing scene preceding his death on the Upper Ottawa; how the first attack of the dire malady on the brave Governor, was noticed in the woods, when he was induced to return to Quebec; how on his nearing the stream, his horror of water was such that he frantically ran into the woods where, in his frenzy, he was heard repeating to himself, "Charles Lennox, die like a man! Shall it be said that a Richmond was afraid to meet death? No, never!" After struggling very hard, he was overpowered and secured by his attendants, taken to the boat and tied down. The noise of the waves brought on another furious attack. Death closed the tragedy, at Richmond, long before he reached the castle. A tablet marks his grave, in the Anglican cathedral, at Quebec.*

On the 15th March, 1824, the *elite*

* Professor Benjamin Silliman, of Yale College, notices in 1819, a curious appliance of the Duke's for convivial purposes at the castle. "Among the curiosities of the place, is a famous round table with a circular place cut in the middle. This, it seems, is occupied by the host when he drinks wine with his friends who are arranged around him. That there may be no impediment to conviviality, not even the usual trouble of circulating the bottle, there is an ingenious machine of brass, shaped a little like a sextant, which can, at pleasure, be attached to the table, or removed; the centre embraces a pivot, on which it moves, and the periphery of the circle, sustains the bottle; the machine revolves in the plane of a horizontal circle; in other words, on the circular table; this is effected merely by touching a spring. The contrivance is certainly as important as it is original."—*Silliman's Tour from Hartford to Quebec, in the autumn of 1819, p. 292.* There is no record of this ingenious machine of the Duke's, having been patented, no doubt very useful, and as the Professor remarks, important "and calculated to save trouble, should the genial nobleman ever have 'twelve-bottle men' dining at the Chateau!"

of Quebec met at the Chateau to found the *Literary and Historical Society* of Quebec. On the 5th Sept. of the next year, the great Duke of Saxe-Weimer, attended by a guard of honor paid a visit to Sir Ralph Burton, Lt.-Governor at the Chateau, in the absence of Lord Dalhousie, and was saluted on his departure, by 21 guns.

* * * * * * *

In bringing to a close this brief sketch, may we not recall how many representatives of royalty, under French and under English rule, Viceroys, proud Dukes, distinguished Earls, martial Counts and Barons, occasionally held there their court, in quasi-regal style, in order to keep up the prestige of France's *Grand Monarque* (Louis XIV.) and thereby impress, the surrounding Indian tribes with his might; or as worthy representatives of the British crown in the new world: Champlain, de Montmagny, Daillebousť, Lauzon, D'Argenson, de Mésy, de Courcelles, stern old Count de Frontenac, La Barre, Callières, de Vaudreuil, de Ramsay, de Longueuil, de Beauharnois, de la Galissonnière, de la Jonquière, Duquesne; General Murray, Sir Guy Carleton, Sir F. Haldimand, Lord Dorchester, General Prescott, Sir James H. Craig, Sir George Prevost, Sir James Kempt, Sir John Coape Sherbrooke, the Duke of Richmond, Earl Dalhousie, Lord Aylmer?

SPENCER GRANGE,
Quebec.

ARMS OF FRANCE, UNDER HENRY III.